

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. -21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) In a redundant array of inexpensive devices (RAID) comprising a controller and a plurality of storage devices for storing user data, the controller storing a plurality of RAID algorithms to be implemented for writing data to and reading data from the storage devices, a RAID conversion method for converting the array from a first RAID algorithm to a second RAID algorithm, comprising:

alternating between performing tasks in a conversion state and performing tasks in a user I/O state, wherein the tasks in the conversion state include:

(a) reading a unit of user data from the storage devices according to the first RAID algorithm;

(b) defining a watermark indicating the position where the data is read from the first RAID; and

(c) writing user data on appropriate storage devices according to the second RAID algorithm, wherein steps (a) and (c) are repeated to read and write data up to the watermark, and wherein the tasks in the user I/O state include reading data from the storage devices upon user requests, wherein when requested data exist on both sides of the watermark, the requested data is read according to the second RAID algorithm before the watermark and according to the first RAID algorithm after the watermark; and

wherein the conversion state and user I/O state are repeated until all data on the storage devices are converted.

23. (original) The method of claim 22, wherein the writing step includes writing updates to a semi-permanent cache.

24. - 65. (canceled)